Sir R. MANNINGHAM's

DIARY

Concerning

MARY TOFT,

The pretended

RABBET-BREEDER.

347709

AN EXACT

DIARY

Of what was obſerv'd during a

CLOSE ATTENDANCE

UPON

MARY TOFT,

The pretended

RABBET-BREEDER

OF

Godalming in *Surrey,*

From *Monday Nov.* 28, to *Wedneſday Dec.* 7 following.

Together with

An Account of her Confeſſion of the FRAUD.

By Sir *RICHARD MANNINGHAM*, Kt. Fellow of the *Royal Society*, and of the *College of Phyſicians, London.*

LONDON, Printed for FLETCHER GYLES over-againſt *Grays-Inn* in *Holborn*, and ſold by J. ROBERTS at the *Oxford-Arms in Warwick-Lane.* 1726.

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AN EXACT

DIARY

Of what was obſerv'd during a cloſe Attendance upon *MARY TOFT*, the pretended RABBET-BREEDER, &c.

ON *Sunday* Evening the 27th of *November*, 1726. Mr. *St. Andrè*, Anatomiſt to His *Majeſty*, having received an Expreſs from Mr. *John Howard*, Surgeon and Man-Midwife in *Guilford*, giving him an Account that another Rabbet was then

then leaping in *Mary Toft*, ſent me Notice of it by Letter about eleven of the Clock the ſame Night, deſiring withal that I would keep at home, and he would call upon me ſome time that Night, in order to carry me with him to *Guilford*.

I ſat up till two in the Morning waiting for him, and then ſent my Servant to his Houſe, deſiring to be excuſed, for I was then going to Bed; my Servant return'd before I was got into Bed, and told me Mr. *St. Andrè* would be with me preſently, and deſired I would not go to Bed.

Accordingly, between three and four in the Morning, He and Mr. *Limborch*, a *German* Surgeon and Man-Midwife, came to my Houſe; and Mr. *St. Andrè* told me he had been at *Kenſington* ſince he wrote to me,

me, and desired me to go immediately with him to *Guilford*; adding, that it was his Majesty's Pleasure that I should go and see this *Godalming* Woman so much talk'd of, and after a strict Examination to make my Report concerning her.

Immediately we set out together for *Guilford* about four in the Morning, and arrived there a little after twelve at Noon: We stopp'd at Mr. *Howard*'s House, who being out of Town we went directly over the way to the House where *Mary Toft* (the Woman said to be delivered of seventeen Rabbets) then lodged.

I found her in Bed, and after asking her several Questions in the presence of Mr. *St. Andrè*, Mr. *Limborch*, and several Women and Midwives, I proceeded to examine her Breasts, wherein

wherein was a ſmall Quantity of thin *Serous Matter* like *Milk*; I then felt her Belly all over very carefully, which was ſoft, and not much larger than ordinary, and by no means like a Woman with Child; the Right ſide of her Belly, indeed, was ſomewhat bigger than the Left, with a Hardneſs a-croſs it, which when I preſs'd, ſhe ſaid it gave her Pain.

I afterwards diligently ſearch'd the whole *Vagina*, and being well aſſured at that time all was clear from Impoſture, I touch'd the *Os Uteri*, which was cloſe and contracted in ſuch manner that it would not receive ſo much as the point of a Bodkin into it's Orifice; the Neck of the *Uterus* was ſomewhat long; I then preſs'd againſt the *Uterus* with my Fingers opened in ſuch a manner as to receive as much of the Body of the *Uterus* into my Hand

as poſſible, which ſeem'd to me to contain ſomething of Subſtance in its Cavity.

While I was thus examining I applied my other Hand at different times to the ſeveral Parts of her Belly, whereby it ſeem'd to me that there was Subſtance, not only in the Cavity of the *Uterus*, but alſo along the right ſide of the Belly, which I then judg'd to be the *Falloppian Tube*; but feeling no Motion all this while, I enquir'd of the Women then preſent how long it was ſince the Rabbet leapt (as they term'd it) and whether they were of Opinion it was now dead; to which they anſwer'd, the laſt time it leapt was about one in the Morning.

I left her for that time, and did not viſit her again till about five in the Afternoon, jointly with Mr. *John*

Howard her Surgeon, when I again examin'd her in like manner as before, and asking Mr. *John Howard*, whether he then thought the Rabbet was dead? He answer'd, he could not exactly tell, but had lately observ'd, if hot Clothes were apply'd, the Rabbet (if alive) would leap again; upon which I immediately ordered Clothes to be made very hot, and apply'd them my self to all her Belly, being very desirous to feel that leaping Motion they so much talk'd of. Upon applying of the first Cloth the Motion began, which they called the leaping up of the Rabbet; it was indeed a Motion like a sudden leaping of something within the right side of her Belly, where I had before felt that particular Hardness.

The Motions were various, sometimes with very strong Throws cross

the

the Belly, eſpecially on the right ſide, at other times with ſudden Jerks and Riſings, and tremulous Motions and Pantings, like the ſtrong Pulſations of the Heart; and as I ſat on the Bed in Company with five or ſix Women, it would ſometimes ſhake us all very ſtrongly: The whole appeared to me very different from any convulſive or hyſterick Motion I had ever met with before.

We then left the Woman, and Mr. *Howard* parted from us, Mr. *St. Andrè*, Mr. *Limborch*, and myſelf went to the *White-hart-Inn*; but within leſs than an hour Mr. *John Howard* brought us, wrapt in a Paper, a piece of Membrane, which he ſaid he had juſt taken from the Woman, and ſhew'd it us. I told him he ought to have ſent for me, that I might have taken it away myſelf,

being come down for that Purpoſe: To which he reply'd, 'twas true, but he believ'd there was more to come, which I ſhould take away before I return'd to *London*, or to that effect. Upon examining the Membrane which he brought, it appear'd to me like a piece of Bladder, but he inſiſted it was a part of the *Chorion*, and that he had more of it at home: Upon which I walked with him to his Houſe to ſee the Rabbets and Membranes which he ſaid he had taken from the Woman and preſerved in Spirits of Wine.

Mr. *John Howard* aſk'd me to go with him and ſee one of his Patients who was very ill; adding, he believ'd it would be ſome time before any more Membranes would come; and having left Orders to be ſent for ſo ſoon as the Woman's Pains came on, we forth-

with

with went thither, and from thence to Mr. *Caſtle*'s at the *Priory*, where we met Mr. *Thomas Howard*, his Brother, and ſeveral Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood.

About eight in the Evening a Meſſenger came to us from the Woman and told us ſhe was in Pain: We went immediately, and I found her ſitting in a great Chair by the Fire-ſide; I aſk'd her if ſhe was then in Pain, ſhe anſwer'd, no, but that ſhe had ſome ſharp Pains juſt before I came in: I then touch'd her, and in the *Vagina* perceiv'd with my Forefinger and Thumb ſomewhat like a piece of Skin; but being willing to know whether it came out of the *Uterus*, I paſſed my Finger on one ſide the ſaid piece of Skin in the *Vagina* to find if there was any part of that Skin or Membrane yet remaining within the

Uterus,

Uterus; but perceiving the *Os Uteri* close, as before, and in the same Form as I left it last, I presently took out what lay in the *Vagina*, and upon examining it, confess I was much surpriz'd, it appearing to me so like a piece of Hog's Bladder, that I was not able to form any other Judgment of it, as I then told Mr. *Howard*, Mr. *St. Andrè*, Mr *Limborch*, and all that were there present, assuring them that it was my Opinion that Membrane never came out of the *Uterus*.

The Woman, *Mary Toft*, from whom I had taken it, seemed much concern'd at what I said, and cry'd. I ask'd her the Reason of her crying, to which she gave me no Answer, but the Women about her said, it was because she supposed I thought her a Cheat.

I asked

I asked for a Hog's Bladder, and they presently brought one fresh blown up, which it seems they had in the House :: This added to my Jealousy. Then I compared the Membrane which I took from the Woman with the Hog's Bladder, and could perceive no Difference but in the Thickness, in which the Bladder something exceeded the Membrane; they had both the same strong *urinous* Smell peculiar to a Hog's Bladder. I still insisted I should not be satisfied as to that Affair, unless I received out of the *Uterus* itself a piece of Membrane of the same kind with *that* I had already taken from the *Vagina*.

Mr. *John Howard* and Mr. *St. André* bid me have a little Patience and I should soon be fully satisfied. I still urg'd the Similitude of the Membrane

brane to a Hog's Bladder, requiring them to tell me what they themſelves thought it did moſt reſemble? Both of them agreed, nothing look'd more like a Hog's Bladder than it did; and Mr. *St. Andrè* added, that had he not actually deliver'd the Woman of part of a Rabbet from the very *Uterus* itſelf, this Circumſtance would alſo induce him to believe the whole a Fraud.

The ſame Evening *Mary Toft* had ſeveral Pains like Labour-pains while I ſat before her, which I believe was full three Hours, and I was all that time in expectation of receiving ſomething from her *Uterus*; the Pains were ſometimes very preſſing, and the *Os Uteri* ſeem'd to prepare for opening, but they went off again ſuddenly.

When

When we return'd from the Woman to the *White Hart*, I told them again, that the more I conſidered the thing, the more ſtrongly I was convinced, that the Membrane I took from the Woman had never been in the *Uterus*, but was really a piece of Hog's Bladder artfully conveyed into the *Vagina*.

Upon this, very warm Diſputes aroſe amongſt us, and Mr. *St. Andrè* urged it was not more ſurpriſing, than that Rabbets ſhould come from her *Uterus*; adding, that he was convinced of *that Truth* by examining the Rabbet he had taken from her *Uterus*; which at the ſame time had the exact external Appearance of Animals, like ſuch Creatures as muſt inevitably undergo the Changes that happen to adult Animals by Food and

Air; and that they carried within them the ſtrongeſt Marks of *Fœtus's*, even by ſuch Parts as cannot exiſt in an Adult, and without which a *Fœtus* cannot poſſibly be ſuppos'd to live, or to that effect. This he thought prov'd, in the ſtrongeſt Terms poſſible, that theſe Animals were of a particular kind, and not bred in a natural way, ſaying, Why therefore might not this Membrane which looks like a Hog's Bladder, come alſo out of the *Uterus?* from whence he verily believed that it did, and that it might be part of the *Chorion*; to which Mr. *Howard* and Mr. *Limborch* aſſented.

After this Diſpute, and at their joint Deſire, I determin'd to make no publick Mention of this Affair till I had ſeen the Event of the whole Tranſaction, or had freſh Reaſon to ſuſpect a Fraud,

a Fraud, leſt by ſuch an Alarm I ſhould rather obſtruct than forward the finding out the Truth: I then mark'd the Membrane which I took from the *Vagina*, by cutting a ſmall part of it, which I brought with me to *London*.

Tueſday the 29th, we brought *Mary Toft* to *London* with us, and lodg'd her at Mr. *Lacy*'s Bagnio in *Leiceſter Fields*: I ſat up with her all that Night; ſhe often had the Motion on the Right ſide of her Belly, and ſometimes very ſtrongly.

Wedneſday the 30th, the Motion was more faint, and ſhe paſs'd the Night tolerably well. Some time that Day I told Dr. *Douglaſs* what I had obſerv'd at *Guilford*, and took out of my Pocket-Book the piece of Membrane which I called a piece of Hog's

Bladder, and ſhew'd it him, and aſk'd his Opinion; he ſaid it look'd like a piece of Hog's Bladder, and added, Surely this muſt be a Cheat, or to that effect: The ſame Day I told the Story of the Hog's Bladder to his Grace the Duke of *Richmond*, Duke of *Montague*, Lord *Baltimore*, and Mr. *Molyneux*, but did not declare it publickly for the Reaſons I have given.

Thurſday the 1ſt Inſtant, about ten in the Morning, the Motion was very languid, and having intermitted for a while, ſhe was ſeiz'd with Pains like thoſe of Labour: I then prepared, as before at *Guilford*, to deliver her; and having diligently ſearch'd the *Vagina*, I found it clear, and received a Pain or two, which were ſtrong and exactly like Labour-Pains: Upon this I deſired Dr. *Douglaſs*, who was then preſent, that

that *he* would pleaſe likewiſe to examine her, and openly declare his Opinion, which he did, and in the hearing of ſeveral Perſons of Diſtinction, profeſs'd that he found the *Vagina* clear, and was of Opinion the Pains were of the ſame Nature with Labour-Pains. I then took my Place again, and received more Pains of the like Nature, and perceiv'd the *Os Uteri* to ſpread a little and grow ſofter, her Face alſo flush'd and her Pulſe was rais'd, as it always was whenever ſhe had thoſe Pains upon her.

After ſome time the Motion on the right ſide of her Belly, which they call'd the leaping up of the Rabbet, begun again, and thoſe Pains like Labour-Pains went ſuddenly off; her Pulſe ſoon became calm as before, and the flushing of her Face diſappeared; ſhe

paſs'd

paſs'd the remainder of the Day indifferently well, having for the moſt part the Motion on the right ſide of her Belly, which I never obſerv'd had any Influence on her Pulſe; her Diet was Beef, Rabbet, Red-Herring, and ſuch like: That Night ſhe ſlept very well.

Friday the 2d Inſtant, ſhe had the Motion the greateſt part of the Day, towards Evening it increaſed extreamly, inſomuch that ſhe fell into violent Convulſions, which I never before obſerv'd in her, with frequent Contractions of her Fingers, rolling of her Eyes, and great Riſings in her Stomach and Belly: During the Fit ſhe would often make a whining Noiſe, and at Intervals be more than ordinary faint. She continued in her Fit near two Hours, for ſome Minutes I could

ſcarcely

ſcarcely perceive ſhe had any Pulſe; when ſhe came out of her Fit, ſhe perceived herſelf very weak for ſome time, and when I aſk'd if ſhe remembred ſhe had been in a Fit, ſhe anſwer'd, No; ſhe reſted well that Night.

On *Saturday* the 3d in the Morning ſhe was briſk, and all that Day had the Motion by Intervals; towards Evening ſhe had another Convulſion Fit, though not ſo violent as the former; this Night ſhe was very reſtleſs, and ſometimes convulſed, had a Difficulty in making Water, and the Motion in her Belly was very little.

On *Sunday* the 4th Inſtant, about Eleven of the Clock in the Morning, Dr. *Douglaſs* and my ſelf did carefully examine her Belly, when we perceived a Swelling a little above the *Os Pubis*

Pubis, ſuch as we had never felt there before, it was long, and, as we apprehended in the Cavity of the *Uterus*, which we obſerv'd had little or no Motion, this we could not account for; we each of us examined the *Vagina*, and found it clear as before, the *Os Uteri* ſoft and ſpread, as on *Thurſday* laſt, but ſomething more relax'd.

About Three in the Afternoon, the Pains, like Labour Pains, came on again: I touch'd her as before, and Dr. *Douglaſs*, Dr. *Mowbray*, Mr. *Limborch* the *German* Surgeon and Man Midwife, who were then preſent, did the ſame; and we agreed, that the Nature of the Pains were ſuch, and ſo violent, as we apprehended ſomething would ſoon iſſue from the *Uterus*; and this we declared in the hearing

hearing of many Perſons of Diſtinction, who were then preſent: And I well remember, the Room being very full, I deſired if there was any Perſon preſent willing to examine her, that they would do it then while her Pains were upon her. Accordingly, ſeveral Perſons did examine her, and declared to the ſame Purpoſe: After having received ſeveral Pains, they, together with the other Symptoms of approaching Labour, vaniſhed on the ſudden, as formerly.

In the Evening, *Thomas Howard*, Porter to Mr. *Lacy*'s *Bagnio*, made an Information againſt *Mary Toft*, before Sir *Thomas Clarges*, Bart. one of His Majeſty's Juſtices of Peace, concerning a Rabbet ſhe had clandeſtinely procured by his Aſſiſtance; upon which ſhe was taken into Cuſtody, and

ſtrictly examined by Sir *Thomas:* She very obſtinately denied all the Porter had ſworn; but her Siſter, who nurſs'd her, being examined to the ſaid Fact upon Oath, acknowledged the procuring the Rabbet in a clandeſtine manner; but that it was not deſigned for the Uſe we ſuſpected, but for eating only.

Soon after *Mary Toft* confeſs'd ſhe had procured the Rabbet, according to the Porter's Depoſition, but that it was her Intention to eat it, ſhe having *long'd* for it, and moſt obſtinately perſiſted that ſhe was ſtill big with a Rabbet.

The ſame Evening I examined her again, and her *Uterus* appear'd to me to contain ſomething of Subſtance in it; whereupon I earneſtly preſs'd Sir *Thomas Clarges* that ſhe might not be

ſent

ſent to Priſon that Night, being ſtill apprehenſive there might ſomething come from her *Uterus* in a little time; and, as the Fraud was not fully detected, I judg'd it might prove of very ill Conſequence to remove her till the whole was found out.

On *Monday* the 5th, I gave my Opinion to Sir *Thomas*, concerning *Mary Toft*; and, leſt he ſhould commit her to Priſon, I ſpoke to ſeveral Perſons of Diſtinction, and that Day wrote to the Honourable Mr. *Molyneux* to aſſiſt me in that Affair, well knowing how induſtrious they had always been, in endeavouring to find out this ſuppoſed Fraud; for I believ'd a ſudden Commitment of her to Priſon, before the Cheat did manifeſtly appear, would be a means of preventing

a Diſcovery: The Copy of my ſaid Letter is as follows.

To the Hon. Mr. MOLYNEUX.

Dear Sir,

" I Have, ſince I left you, very
" maturely conſidered what you
" ſaid this Morning, and the Con-
" tents of the Letter frank'd by
" Lord *Onſlow*, which you alſo ſhew-
" ed us, importing a Diſcovery of a
" Fraud in the Affair in the Coun-
" try; and adding, *that*, to what
" happen'd to my ſelf at *Guildford*,
" in relation to my taking away from
" the *Vagina* of *Mary Toft* the *Godal-*
" *ming* Woman, what I call the Piece
" of Hog's Bladder, and the Depoſi-
" tion about the Rabbet laſt *Sunday*
" Night, which I heard *Thomas*
" *Howard*,

" *Howard*, the Porter of *Lacy*'s
" Bagnio, make before Sir *Thomas*
" *Clarges*, in the Preſence of ſeveral
" Perſons of Quality, and the Unna-
" turalneſs of the Production, ſup-
" poſed to have been; all this, I ſay,
" laid together, is to me ſuch Evi-
" dence of *Roguery*, as makes me
" ſtrongly believe the whole to be a
" Fraud. Therefore, that our En-
" deavours fully to detect the Cheat
" may prove moſt effectual, and the
" unnatural Impoſture may moſt clear-
" ly appear to the Publick, I think
" *Mary Toft* ſhould by no means be
" ſent to Priſon, till the Truth comes
" out; but that ſhe ſhould rather be
" kept, and moſt ſtrictly watched in
" ſome private Houſe, where all Per-
" ſons, thoſe of the Faculty eſpecial-
" ly, may have free and convenient

" Acceſs

" Acceſs to her, which a Priſon will
" not ſo well afford, till the Matter be
" as plainly and fully detected as
" poſſible; for which Purpoſe, I will
" wait upon Sir *Thomas Clarges* to
" take Meaſures accordingly; and, if
" you will give Leave, will call on
" you as I come from him, to ac-
" quaint you with our Reſolutions.

I am,

SIR,

Your moſt humble Servant,

Dec. 6, 1726.

R. MANNINGHAM.

After

After ſome Difficulty, I prevailed with Sir *Thomas Clarges* to let her remain in the Cuſtody of the *High Conſtable* of *Weſtminſter*, at Mr. *Lacy*'s Bagnio, till the Cheat ſhould be found out, or at leaſt for a few Days longer; to which he agreed.

On *Tueſday* the 6th, Sir *Thomas* threaten'd her ſeverely, and began to appear the moſt propereſt Phyſician in her Caſe, and his Remedies took Place, and ſeem'd to promiſe a perfect Cure; for we heard no more of her former Labour-like Pains.

I urged her very much to confeſs the Truth; and told her, I believ'd her to be an Impoſtor, and that ſhe was differently form'd from other Women, having ſome peculiar way of conveying Pieces of Rabbets into her *Uterus*, and of impoſing upon the World

World by her Motions and Pains, and therefore I reſolved to try a very painful Experiment upon her, and was accordingly prepared for that Purpoſe; whereas if ſhe would ingeniouſly confeſs the whole Truth, I would ſpeak to ſeveral of the Nobility in her Behalf, ſome of whom then preſent promiſed her their good Offices on the like Condition.

I aſſured her alſo there was no Time left for Delay; and if ſhe would not confeſs, I ſhould immediately proceed to the Operation.

Theſe Threats made great Impreſſions upon her, and being withal in a moſt particular manner exhorted by his Grace the Duke of *Montague*, Lord *Beltimore*, Dr. *Douglaſs*, and myſelf, to make a free and open Confeſſion, before it ſhould be done by any

any other Perſon in the Country, and to avoid ſo terrible an Operation; ſhe at laſt begg'd very heartily to be let alone till the next Morning, and if ſhe did not then confeſs, I might proceed as I pleaſed.

Accordingly on *Wedneſday December 7*, in the Morning, in the Preſence of the two Noblemen before mentioned, Dr. *Douglaſs* and myſelf, ſhe began her Confeſſion of the Fraud; and in her Confeſſion ſhe own'd, That upon her miſcarrying ſhe was ſeiz'd with violent Floodings, and the Womb was then as ſhe thought open as if ſhe had been juſt deliver'd of a full-grown Child, ſhe did verily believe one of her wicked Accomplices did then convey into her Womb part of the Monſter (as ſhe

calls it) being the Claws and Body of a Cat, and the Head of a Rabbet; this put her to much Pain: After that time ſhe believed nothing was ever put into her Womb, but into the Paſſage only, by the Advice of a Woman Accomplice whom ſhe has not yet nam'd, and who told her ſhe had now no Occaſion to work for her Living as formerly, for ſhe would put her into a Way of getting a very good Livelihood, and promiſed continually to ſupply her with Rabbets, and ſhould therefore expect part of the Gain, or to that effect. *Mary Toft* aſked what way that was. The Woman told her ſhe muſt put up her Body ſo many pieces of Rabbets as would make up the Number of Rabbets which a Doe Rabbet uſually

kindles

kindles at one time, otherwiſe ſhe would be ſuſpected. *Mary Toft* aſked how many that was; the Woman told her, ſometimes thirteen.

From that time *Mary Toft* did often, by the Aſſiſtance of that Woman, convey Parts of Rabbets into her Body, 'till at laſt ſhe could do it by her ſelf, as ſhe had an Opportunity, and that ſhe did continue ſo to do.

Now, by the conſtant Irritation of thoſe extraneous Bodies, thus artfully convey'd into her *Vagina*, the whole *Uterus* ſuffer'd much, and became larger in Bulk than it ought to be in its natural State; and the Bones, and other Parts of thoſe Rabbets, ſo convey'd into the *Vagina*, did often offend the Neck of the *Uterus*, which, to-

gether with artful Management of her ſelf, did occaſion thoſe violent bearing-down Pains, which came on by Intervals, and very exactly counterfeited the true Labour-Pains. The Motions of her Belly were partly Artifice, and partly real Convulſions; for I have often obſerv'd ſome of the Motions in her ſoundeſt Sleep, and even ſince ſhe has confeſs'd the Fraud, part of her Motions being involuntary.

Mary Toft owned there was nothing in her Paſſage, when I examined her, only that time when I took the Piece of Bladder from her, which ſhe had put into her Body a little before I came to her, on *Monday* the 28th of *November*, 1726. about Eight in

the

the Evening; and ever ſince that Time ſhe was afraid to put any thing into her Body, becauſe I had often told her, if I found twenty Rabbets at times in her Body, it would go for nothing with me; for I ſhould never be convinced, unleſs I did take ſome Parts of Rabbets from out of the very Womb it ſelf, which I was very well aſſured could never be put there by Art.

Dr. *Douglaſs*, who was ſo kind as to write down her Confeſſion from her own Mouth, will I hope ſhortly oblige the World with it at large, when ſhe has diſcover'd the whole.

Thus have I given a full and faithful Account of every material thing which occurred to me during my conſtant

ſtant Attendance upon *Mary Toſt* from *Monday*, the 28th of *November*, 1726, to *December* the 7th following, which I thought my ſelf obliged to communicate to the World, as well for their Satisfaction, as the Juſtification of my own Conduct.

Decemb. 8. 1726. *R. Manningham.*

FINIS.

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